

**LAKE WASHINGTON BOULEVARD VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING #3: BOULEVARD UNIT**

Thursday, September 14, 2006

Rainier Community Center

MEETING SUMMARY

Staff Members Present: Katie Moller, Urban Forester; Jon Martin, Northeast District Crew Chief; Lisa Beyeler, Planning Intern

Meeting: The purpose of the meeting was to present maintenance opportunities for the development of the boulevard along Lake Washington Boulevard and to share ideas and listen to the neighbor and communities hopes and concerns for the proposed Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) for Lake Washington Boulevard.

The meeting was held from 6:30-8:30pm. About 20 community members attended and most everyone participated in the discussion with lots of questions and comments about the Vegetation Management Plan.

The focus of the meeting was a PowerPoint presentation that included a summary of the University of Washington study of Lake Washington Boulevard, the current progress of the Vegetation Management Plan with Seattle Parks and Recreation, and an in-depth examination of the proposed boulevard tree palette and spacing. These presentations were intended as a starting point to elicit ideas from the community.

The University of Washington study was conducted by undergraduate students in the Landscape Architecture program under professors Iain Robertson and Daniel Winterbottom. Using the 1903 Olmsted design of Lake Washington Boulevard and their vision for the greater Seattle metropolitan region as well as the 1986 study of Lake Washington Boulevard by the firm EDAW, the students began generating ideas and concepts for the management of vegetation along the Boulevard.

The University of Washington students proposed many thought-provoking models for the boulevard along Lake Washington Boulevard. Their key concept was a series of different boulevard tree typologies that reflected the character of each section of Lake Washington Boulevard. These typologies included Neighborhood, Enclosed, Open, and Threshold.

Since the University of Washington studio ended in the spring of 2006, Seattle Parks and Recreation has spent the summer reviewing their plans as well as looking for ways to practically implement their maintenance concepts.

Seattle Parks and Recreation staff used GIS data to compile statistics regarding the types of trees currently along the boulevard and suggested areas of needed improvement. These statistics measured percentages of different tree populations, health, and physical attributes such as trunk diameter.

The materials proved to be a good catalyst for a broad discussion of the opportunities presented by the boulevard unit of the Vegetation Management Plan. With the input from this meeting, Parks Urban Forestry staff will put together a draft Vegetation Management Plan for presentation on October 26th at 6:30pm at Rainier Community Center.

Written

Comments:

- South of Mount Baker there is a grove of dead trees. Would the Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) suggest the replacement of these trees or leaving these trees as snags for habitat?
- Views are important, but habitat/wildlife should be equally as important and considered as an asset to Lake Washington Boulevard (LWB)
 - Having naturalistic scenery close to home is important
- A sense of canopy is important to the aesthetic of LWB
- Size of leaf needs to be considered in the tree palette to address drainage concerns (flooding in winter)
 - This is especially prevalent in Mt. Baker Beach and Horton
- Large, thick canopies compromise the safety of pedestrians
 - Pedestrian lighting at a lower level
 - Inventory for CPTED
 - Guidelines for street lighting implemented to create a more natural aesthetic at the detriment of pedestrian safety
- Cherry Trees
 - Cherry trees compromised a large portion of the current planting palette along LWB
 - If there are capitol funds, how many cherry trees would be replaced when they die?
 - There is an 80 year legacy of Cherry trees along LWB
 - The number of trees needs to be significant for effect
 - Cherry Blossom Organization will bring an expert from Japan to examine the health of the current trees
 - Perhaps a different hybrid would be effective and healthier?
 - The right of way where the central boulevard splits to Leschi might be an ideal place for cherry trees
- Seattle Parks Foundation's Tree Donation Program
 - Challenge the premise of street tree maintenance and spacing
- What considerations are being made to street tree plantings near paved sidewalks and trails?
- Bald cypress is known to thrive in swamps and wet areas and should be considered on the plant palette
- More species need to be added to the tree palette list

- We should not exclude the current species and current locations of trees, but aim to use the same species (or similar) and same locations (or similar) where feasible. It is also important to consider some alternative species and locations
- Four of the trees are labeled “remove invasives” (for instance Hawthorne). What is the definition of invasive in the tree palette?
 - What is the plan for removing invasive trees and plants?
- Seafair
 - A one-week event should not dictate the design and maintenance of LWB for the rest of the 51 weeks out of the year
- How will the tree typologies affect views from private homes?
- Disappointed that Parks did not allow for tree planting along Alki, and fearful that the same may happen on LWB
- Views for private homes should not supersede the importance of views for pedestrians and park users
- Framing of views with street trees important
 - Open/closed, light/dark, unobstructed views/framed views
 - An inventory of view potential within the park would be helpful
- Enclosed Tree Typology
 - Only 1/6 or 1/7 of the entire boulevard is in the enclosed typology, this is not enough
 - A sense of canopy is important and unique
- Home owners should be directly involved in the process of planting street trees
- The boulevard belongs to everyone – the private home owner, the pedestrian, bicyclist, and driver
- Canopies of the arboretum drive area create a beautiful experience, a similar experience along LWB would be wonderful
- Trees should be placed further apart so that when they mature, they do not block views
- Views are linear and side-to-side (both need to be taken into account)
 - Also, views from the parks to the private homes should be considered
 - There needs to be a buffer, as when one goes to the park, they are seeking to escape from the built world, not be confronted with it
- Are there inventories of housing/non-housing areas?
 - Basic walking of the Blvd (greenbelt areas vs. developed areas)
- South of Leschi (Lakeside), the hardscape does not add to the aesthetic quality of the area – avoid this paradigm.
- Street trees in Ballard, UW, and Greek Row are beautiful allees
 - Light/dark massing
 - Fall and spring color
- What is the planning process for the VMP? What are the next steps?
 - Does Ken Bounds make the final approval?
 - Does the VMP go to City Council?
- Will those who sign the guest list be notified of future meetings?
- Final VMP will be presented on November 30th, not the 20th (agenda is incorrect)